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ABSTRACT

Since teachers are the key to educational reform, teacher self-evaluations are critical aspects of change. In an inservice course on teaching reading comprehension through retellings, teachers were asked to examine their practices and reflect on a different method of assessing student comprehension. Focus was on teacher change and fears of change when teachers were asked to use alternative assessment instruments in their classrooms. The study examined the change that occurred in teacher thought and practice as revealed through their reflections and whether they carried over these practices to their classrooms two years later. Participants, 23 classroom teachers from a rural southern community, taught a variety of subjects in kindergarten through high school. During a course on comprehension and retellings they were grouped in the class according to the grade level they taught, asked to collect retelling samples from their students and then write a group reflection report of their findings, as well as a reflection paper using a Teacher/Retelling Observation Sheet as a guideline and individual reflections of the process of using retellings as an assessment tool. Data indicated that 65% of the teachers perceived themselves as changing in their practices, but because of fears, misconceptions, and expectations recorded in their reflections, only 48% actually changed. Two years later, 18 of the original 23 responded to a follow-up survey. Results showed that 100% were using retellings as part of their curriculum. Purposes for using retellings indicated 69% for assessment, 50% for instruction, and 37% for a variety of reasons. (Contains 26 references. Appended are: retelling observation sheet, retellings research chart, follow-up survey, retelling checklist, and content analysis of the follow-up survey.) (NKA)

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How Does Teacher Reflections Affect Teaching Practices?

Follow-up Study

12th European Reading Conference

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Theoretical and Conceptual Rational

With the move toward Goals 2000, educational reform continues to change its focus. Following a constructivist view of learning (e.g., Bruner, 1985; Vygotsky, 1962; Wells, 1986), educational theorists (e.g., Belenky, Clincy, Goldberger, and Tarule, 1986) have inspired teachers to begin to reflect on their own instructional and evaluative practices as part of the change in education. Dewey (1963) also makes reference to the importance of participation of teachers in their own learning. "There is, I think, no point in the philosophy of progressive education which is sounder than its emphasis upon the importance of the participation of the learner in the formation of the purpose which directs his activities in the learning process..." (p.67). Reflections allow inservice teachers and pre-service teachers to participate in the conversations connecting theory to practice. To become more effective in the classroom, teachers must be exposed to new theoretical and instructional ideas, have the opportunity to put them into practice, and reflect on what they have learned through this process. Reflecting allows inservice and pre-service teachers to use their observations and begin the process of transformation, for example, transforming one's beliefs and actions regarding alternative forms of instruction and assessment. Change is difficult - it takes time and multiple experiences to overcome fears, misconceptions, and implement new practices. This cannot occur if teachers are not active participants in their learning.

Since teachers are the key to educational reform, teacher self-evaluations are critical aspects of change. As change agents, teachers must begin to reflect on their experiences in teacher education or inservice courses, places where they can develop pedagogical theories and beliefs that inform their classroom practice (Olson, & Singer, 1994).

Reflection allows teachers to discover what they have learned throughout their educational experiences. Teachers can analyze their own ways of knowing as a first step to better understanding how learning takes place (Draper, 1994). Through reflections, we talk to ourselves to learn and to problem solve; we rearrange what we know and make the introspective process concrete. Reflection enables us to evaluate our instructional and evaluative practices to become better learners and thus better teachers (Gipe, Duffy, & Richards, 1989). Draper argues, "Through self-knowledge a teacher can begin to see how life experiences shape behavior in the classroom. Self-knowledge is essential to good teaching"

(1994, p.3). Reflection makes it easier to recognize and facilitate change.

More and more, teachers are beginning to take part in decision-making in curriculum design and classroom instruction and evaluation practices (Sharpiro, & Kilbey, 1990; Stern, & Shavelson, 1981). Shapiro and Kilbey argue that teachers must take a professional responsibility to reflect on their practices, theories and beliefs. In the field of reading, reflective practices play an integral part in understanding reading and its alignment with the constructivist theory of learning. Reading educators and researchers continue to learn about the complexities of the reading process and evaluation of that process. Throughout history, reading is continually redefined from two different perspectives. Ulmer (1992) states:

> The first perspective considers reading as product. People who hold this perspective believe that reading comprehension is a building process. Reading is a process of getting meaning from text. The second aspect or belief concerning the definition of reading is that reading comprehension is defined from the reader's perspective suggesting that there is not one correct meaning that must be interpreted from a text. Meaning depends on the reader's schema. Both points of view are paradigms that reshaped the definition of reading and ultimately led to the current trends toward reading comprehension instruction in the classroom. (1992, p.13)

If reading is considered a process rather than a product and reading comprehension is socially constructed (Goodman, 1978; Goodman, Watson, & Burke, 1987; Harste, Short, & Burke, 1988; Wells, 1986) then it follows that teachers of comprehension should be involved in reflecting on both their instructional and evaluative practices. By learning to reflect on the content of their students' passage retellings, teachers can begin to understand the reading practices that are or are not taking place in their classrooms.

Purpose

Although current educational reform movements are calling for fundamental changes in teaching practice, the research literature documents the difficulty in changing teachers' core beliefs and ultimately their teaching practices (Borko, Flory, & Cumbo, 1993). This study considers what prospective and inservice teachers say they have learned compared to how they implement these learnings in their

classroom instruction and evaluation of reading comprehension (Goldenberg, & Gallimore, 1991). According to Gipe, Duffy, & Richards, "If prospective teachers are to become aware of their belief systems (theoretical orientations) regarding teaching, reflective inquiry into what they've taught, how it went, how it should have gone, and what might be tried instead, may be a vehicle for achieving this goal" (1989, p. 236), The dilemma arises when learning is not reflected in teacher practices. Reflections allow teachers to use critical thinking skills and become empowered to make sound professional choices but often changes do not occur in the classroom even when teachers understand their sound educational purpose. Research suggests that teachers' beliefs prior to instruction influence their own classroom practices which sometimes hinders change in practices from taking place (Hollingsworth, 1989; Irwin-DeVitis, 1996). In many cases teachers understand changes that need to occur, but they do not implement them in the classroom.

The present study addresses this issue. In an inservice course on teaching reading comprehension through retellings, teachers were asked to examine their practices and reflect on a different method of assessing student comprehension. The focus was on teacher change and fears of change when teachers were asked to use alternative assessment instruments in their classrooms.

This study examines the changes that occurred in teacher thought and practice as revealed through their reflections. It also addresses how teachers carried over those beliefs and practices from the reflections to their classrooms two years later. The analysis was threefold: (1) To identify change in teachers' classroom practices after learning how to use an alternative assessment measure with students (finding, cognitive, affective, textual parameters in retellings); (2) If change has occurred from what teachers believed would change actually changed; and, (3) To evaluate teachers' reflections after an inservice using reflections to see if teachers are implementing some of the practices in their classrooms two years later.

Method

Participants

The participants in this study were 23 classroom teachers from a rural community located in a southern town in the U.S. The teachers taught a variety of subjects, and grade levels taught varied from

kindergarten to high school. All teachers were enrolled in a graduate course entitled "Retellings as an instructional and assessment tool". Nineteen of the teachers had never used retellings in the classroom and the other four had never considered the affective, textual and cognitive parameters when using retellings to assess reading comprehension (Feathers, 1998).

Initial Data

Procedure

During an inservice course on comprehension and retellings (children's responses to their reading that allow comprehension to be assessed), 23 teachers were grouped in the class according to the grade level they taught. Each group of four or five were then asked to collect retelling samples from their students in any form (e.g., songs, poems, stories, letters, drawings, and newspapers). Each group decided on a common theme, book, or form to get the data. For example, one group read the same text in their individual classes. Two in the group collected retellings in the form of songs, and two collected retellings in the form of letters. After collecting the data, teachers wrote (1) a group reflection report of their findings, (2) a reflection paper using a Teacher/Retelling Observation Sheet as a guideline, and (3) individual reflections of the process of using retellings as an assessment tool.

Before collecting the data, all 23 teachers were to complete the Teacher/Retelling Observation sheet reflecting on their beliefs about reading comprehension and assessment. Part 1 of the form includes: your philosophy of teaching reading comprehension, your understandings about comprehension assessment, your beliefs about retellings and their uses before this course. Teachers were to pick three of five types of assessment instruments modeled in the course (Feathers & White, 1985; Goodman, 1978; Irwin & Mitchell, 1983; Morrow, 1986; Ulmer, 1992; van Dijk, 1977) to use in their classrooms. One of the three choices could be one they developed based on their own individual classroom needs.

After collecting the data, the teachers spent time in small groups evaluating their retellings and writing up the information for Part II of the Teacher/Retelling Observation sheet. Part II of the form consisted of teachers' feelings before and during the process of collecting and evaluating the retellings (feelings before using retellings, how retellings were introduced to their students, form and instructions used to collect data, evaluation of data, and findings and conclusions). Finally teachers completed their

group reports and Part III of the form which addressed the teachers' feelings after using retellings. An example of a completed guide sheet is in Appendix A.

Data Analysis

The data (the group reports and the Teacher/Retelling Observation sheets) were copied for each rater. The raters independently recorded any categories showing what the teachers had learned (1) from their students, (2) about themselves as a learner, and (3) about the process of change. The teacher-made instruments and the group reports were evaluated to see if teachers' learned knowledge was actually implemented in classroom practice.

To obtain agreement about the location of retelling idea units in the reflection, three raters independently divided each retelling reflection into idea units or clauses, as suggested by Beauchamp (1988). Idea units were important ideas or concepts. After reaching consensus on the idea units, the interrater reliability was .91. The same procedure was used to assess the categories that evolved from the reflections. Finally teachers' perceptual change (as described in their reflections were compared to their actual change (as indicated by the assessment instruments
teachers used and which parameters, textual, cognitive or affective, they considered in their assessment). The raters came together and discussed their findings. Tallying the data from the teacher reflections, seven categories emerged:

A. fears of change

B. misconceptions

C. teachers learned about (1) themselves (2) students, and (3) the process of using the assessment tool

D. instructions or directions given

E. teacher expectations influencing results

F. setting teachers had in the classroom before trying the alternative

G. content findings related to cognitive, textual, affective parameters

Each category was evaluated based on what the teachers learned about themselves, students, and the process of using retellings as assessment tools. The following are examples of statements related to fears

of change (A).

> I knew I wanted to assess their comprehension, but I wasn't sure which components I wanted to look for, or how to assess them (Fieldnote T.19).
>
> I usually did not start retellings until later in the year when I thought that they were able to retell (Fieldnote T.3).
>
> I feel the retellings I used for my project told me a lot more about my students' comprehension than what I have been using in the past (Fieldnote T.13).

The next two examples show how a teacher included information about her fears (A) because of some of her misconceptions (B) and expectations (E); but she followed with statements where she learned about herself as a teacher, her students (C), what they can learn (G), and the process of using retellings (C & G).

> **Feelings Before**
>
> I was reluctant about first graders using retellings using the method that I was relearning (A). After being in the classroom for a few years your train of thought seems to be reshaped or molded whether you prefer for it to or not (B). I believed that first graders would retell in only a few words, very basic words (B) (Fieldnote T17).
>
> **Feelings After**
>
> Thrilled!!! It was so enlightening to assess all that they were able to recall and retell (G). I was impressed to find that what some students felt were important things to know about the story, did not cross the minds of others (C). It was most interesting to find that with the illustrations even your lowest reader included detail of story and content of text (C & G). I was most pleased to discover that information (A). I feel strongly that I will use retellings more to assess comprehension. I continue to read and find interesting facts on comprehension but the research on retellings, for me, is more teacher friendly...and just plain fun (C) (Fieldnote T17).

Results

As part of the instruction in the course students learned about three different aspects of comprehension that could be assessed. Comprehension measurements have often measured what readers

knew (textual) after reading a text and later considered how readers processed what they knew (cognitive). The third area of comprehension, the role of experience and voice (affective) as it relates to both cognitive and textual processing, was newer to the teachers but easy to understand. In the final project for the course teachers were asked to pick three types of retellings to measure comprehension from their own class, keeping the three parameters in mind. Evaluating the retellings and parameters measured in the retellings, all teachers included textual information as stated in their reflection; however, they varied in cognitive and affective measures (See appendix B). Sixty-one percent of the teachers measured affective parameters:

> After the students did their retellings I thought they could have done better, but after I scored each student's retelling I realized several areas where they had strengths I had never realized (Fieldnote T.23).
>
> In the student retellings, I still saw the characters, setting, problem, sequence, and details. What puts retellings ahead of questions is that they lead to more creativity, show inferences, and ask for more student feelings which is very important because we understand more if we can relate to it and compare it to something in our own life (Fieldnote T.1).

Thirteen percent of the teachers who identified the affective parameter disregarded the importance of it. One teacher stated "High school science does not leave much time for the affective" (Fieldnote T.7). This same teacher indicated that the students were more creative than she expected. Forty-eight percent of the teachers measured for cognitive information. "I feel that doing retellings also will lead to higher thinking and more understanding" (Fieldnote T.2). All the teachers in this group were surprised to find the amount of inferencing and critical thinking skills the students used. These first grade teachers commented that they felt the students were too young to go beyond the textual information.

Reflecting on their own learning, teachers were able to evaluate their classroom practices. Many teachers realized they were not evaluating all the thinking involved in the reading process. "Using retellings opened my eyes to a new avenue for assessing comprehension" (Fieldnote T.19). "Each year I look for new ideas and ways to improve myself as a reading teacher. This class has made me more aware

of what comprehension is and how we gain comprehension" (Fieldnote T.5). Most teachers said they would use retellings again. Some said it helped them to see that their students knew more than they thought. A few even compared their lower children to the higher and stated their surprise when the lower students scored higher in the cognitive and affective areas than their higher students. Some teachers elaborated on how they needed to rethink the messages they sent students when they ignored students who "think a little differently." Teachers also realized that based on their own expectations (the type of directions they give, what they ask for in the retellings), the evaluation was skewed in a certain direction. Other teachers didn't realize how their expectations led to certain results. One teacher, in her feelings before using the retellings, stated, "The only type of retelling I knew about was recalling the events in the story". She then commented at the end of the process, "This group did not work well together. In the poetry retellings, my students had higher scores in creativity than in text recall of events" (Fieldnote T.1). She was looking for text recall and dismissed the affective information.

By analyzing the teachers' reflections and comparing these to choices made in selecting the assessment instrument, the data showed differences between the perception of change and actual change in practice. Excerpts from T.9's reflections are a clear example of this phenomenon. She stated in her reflection before using retellings, "I felt a little unsure about retellings at first. I was afraid my students wouldn't give me enough information to evaluate them." After using retellings, she stated in her conclusion, "I feel that retellings will become a big part of the way I'll grade and evaluate children. I'm a hands-on teacher and I like to try many things. We want children to be successful and success comes in many ways." However, when assessing her selection and use of evaluative tools, she chose instruments that dealt with the parameters she thought were important prior to using retellings. Her evaluation tool focused only on retrieval of textual information.

The data indicated that sixty-five percent of the teachers perceived themselves as changing in their practices, but because of fears, misconceptions, and expectations recorded in their reflections, only forty-eight percent actually changed. (See appendix B) Actual change was measured by considering the weight given to the parameters in the teacher-made assessment instruments and comparing them to the teacher reflection statements. In reviewing T.8's reflections, she stated, "This way (retellings), the

learning is meaningful for them, and when learning is meaningful, the children learn much better." However, T.8's assessment instrument evaluated students' comprehension based on textual parameters, which may or may not be meaningful. She believed there was a change in her practice, but it was not indicated in her parameter choices.

The final analysis was the overall tone of the reflections, based on the reflections of the three raters. This analysis indicated that some teachers accepted change but were still fearful as indicated by the weight of the parameters in their own instruments. The in-service teachers also stated they liked using retellings because of the affective and cognitive areas that they had not previously considered in assessing comprehension, but they still felt compelled to include textual information as a priority. Some teachers diminished their fears and accepted change, as indicated by T.19, while others were borderline (eight percent) on changing their practices. Even though forty-eight percent of the teachers enhanced their learning and gladly embraced change, a large number (forty-three percent) did not show any change.

Follow- Up Data

Procedure

This section addresses goal (3) To evaluate teachers' reflections after an inservice using reflections to see if teachers are implementing some of the practices in their classrooms two years later. A follow-up survey was sent to the twenty-three participants, two years later. Eighteen of the original twenty-three responded to the survey. Out of the 18, two dropped out of the teaching profession and became school librarians; therefore, they were excluded from the calculations. The survey was to discover if the participants continued to use retellings in their classroom and for what purpose they were used. Information from the initial data was compared to the information in the follow-up data. See Appendix C for survey questions. Appendix E contains the content analysis of the surveys.

Data Analysis

For the follow-up study, two raters analyzed the responses for old and new categories. Content analysis established some similar and different categories. The categories that emerged were as follows:

A. Usage for retellings

B. Assessment measurements/instruments

C. Content findings related to cognitive, textual, affective parameters

D. Teacher expectations influencing results

E. What teachers learned

F. Instructional changes

After these categories were identified, the results were compared to the initial data findings.

Results

The results of the second study showed that 78% of the participants responded to the follow-up survey (including the 2 librarians). Out of those responses 100 % continued were using retellings as part of their curriculum. The frequency of using retellings varied only slightly. Forty-four percent used retellings four or more times a month while 25% never mentioned frequency. The purposes for using retellings indicated 69% for assessment, 50% for instruction, and 37% used retellings for a variety of reasons as suggested by the following teacher.

> I have found that by using retellings, I am using one of the most effective means of assessment for comprehension. Another purpose of using retellings in my classroom is to instruct. Using retellings allows me the opportunity to teach main idea, setting, characters, and sequencing of story. I use retellings about twice a week (T17).

Earlier T7 stated that assessing high school science did not leave space open for the affective parameter. However, two years later when asked, she stated that using retellings helped connect new knowledge to background knowledge. She felt she could now better assess what her students understood from the information they shared in retellings.

One finding that was surprising was looking at the parameters and measurement instrument used by the teachers who responded. It was surprising to see a higher percentage in the textual parameters than the other two because teachers often seek this information in their classrooms (e.g. County Retelling Checklist). The hope was that teachers would move beyond that parameter into either cognitive or affective parameters.

Percentage of times parameters were chosen to measure in the retellings

The first study results (N=23):

Textual -------100% Cognitive-----48% Affective---------61%

The second year follow-up results (N=18):

Textual ----- 100% Cognitive ----- 31% Affective ----- 25% Instructional-- 50%

The chart indicates while 100% assessed for textual information, only 31% looked for cognitive and 25% for affective. The teachers that did go beyond textual information found rich information. As T9 stated the creative aspects seem more prevalent, "Children that are normally shy are more willing to participate and you see more of their creative side." Considering the cognitive parameter, T17 expressed she learned in retellings is the expectation from a child according to the child's developmental abilities. For example T17 stated, "A child who is not fluent in writing can retell the events of a story orally or through pictures." T17 believes that a student unable at one level can succeed at the developmental stage the child is experiencing.

The tally sheet from the primary study indicated a higher acceptance of cognitive and affective parameters. The follow-up shows a drastic drop in both cognitive and affective with a steady focus in the textual. Since the County, in which these teachers work, has supplied the schools and teachers with a standardized assessment instrument to be used with retellings, teachers feel obligated to comply. See Appendix D for the County assessment instrument. The instrument examines only textual information. Twenty-five percent of the teachers followed this guideline. Another 25% developed a rubric similar to the County Assessment Instrument. 31% developed a new instrument depending on what they were assessing. "I just look to see if students get the main idea, beginning, middle, and end" (T23). "Sequence, characters, plots, setting," (T13). The County Assessment Instrument also assesses sequence, structure, and general information. All respondents felt textual information was crucial. However, teachers are learning more about the individual child they teach.

Many teachers are basing their assessment instruments on what they expect student to be able to do. Often the instruments will be very similar to standardized assessment instruments because teachers are used to using these measurements in the classroom. T22 states, "Prior to retellings, I will show them

an assessment rubric so that they are aware of exactly what I am looking for, and at other times, I simply let them have at it." This seems evident when you compare the teacher's' instruments to the county's.

On the other hand, due to the continued use of retellings in the classroom, some of the teachers are discovering that students go beyond their expectations when given the opportunity. That is why the cognitive and affective parameters are visible as indicated by what the teachers have learned from their results. According to T18, she sees her students getting more interested in reading and writing while being able to obtain "information of each child's comprehension level." As T23 stated, "It gets students thinking." T7 puts the use of alternative assessments as helping students succeed. Retellings help reflect instructional practices as well. As noted by T12, "It is a good assessment tool. Children have different opinions toward the learning aspect of a story. It helps me teach different aspects of a story that I never saw before." Because of retellings, teachers now can address the specific needs of each child. "A child who is not fluent in writing can retell the events of a story orally or through pictures, for example. I have also learned that children can retell a story but leave out a highlighted point like the setting, but still do an excellent retelling" (T17). Retellings allow teachers to practice strategies to help individual students while addressing the whole class.

Conclusion

All of the teachers learned some valuable information about becoming change agents in the area of assessing comprehension. Some teachers learned from retellings because of the retelling form (poem, song, letter, newspaper), others because of the different parameters discussed (affective, cognitive, textual); others because they discovered reading as a process; and still others because it became evident to them that classroom practices can match assessment practices Even though change is a slow process demonstrations of change on a small scale for each of these teachers is apparent. As indicated in many of the initial data reflections, teachers had fears and various trepidation. With practice, comfort, continued learnings and reflections, all the respondents seem to value the use of retellings in their educational practices.

Initial data:

Before I conducted the activities for our projects, I was not very confident of my children's

> abilities to do retellings. I felt like the students were a little young and inexperienced at this point in the year to be successful at these activities. It took a while for me to decide upon activities that would be appropriate retelling activities for students at this age. I know many students can do a lot more that we give them credit for, but I think my lack of understanding and comfort with the subject contributed to my feelings of doubt. I was so comfortable with my typical pattern of reading a story and identifying the main elements, that I was having a hard time adjusting to something so new and different. (T19)

Follow-up data:

> Retellings are a great form of assessment. I can learn a lot about my students from a retelling. Retellings can also be a lot of fun for everyone. Retellings identifies the level of comprehension of each student. Written retellings also allows me to assess the writing ability of my students. Using various forms of retellings helps to encourage creativity in my students. (T19)

As T19 shares in both her initial data and her follow-up data, reflections along with practice allow teachers opportunities to continue to grow as educators even though the initial stages of learning conflict with old learnings. Reflections are useful in helping teachers to learn about the change process; teachers can and do change practices by working through their own thinking processes.

Discussion

The findings of this study suggest that teacher educators can take advantage of opportunities to use instructional strategies (retellings) in more reflective ways to enhance their own theoretical knowledge and improve their classroom practice. Reflections indicate what you learn what learners have internalized and how it has affected their thinking They can begin to take ownership of their own learning by having a deeper insight into what they know compared to what they think they know. Implementing a new comprehension strategy and/or using it in new ways (instruction and assessment) provides data for reflection and instructional change. However, having the opportunity may not be a sufficient factor for change to occur. Introduction to new concepts and ideas – through professional readings, inservice courses, or other professional development activities – provides the background information necessary to initiate the process. Ample time to discuss new ideas, develop opinions, and

raise questions not only enables teachers to take ownership of new knowledge but it also helps facilitate change.

This study also reveals that it takes a long time to change core beliefs. Reflections helped teachers bring misconceptions, fears, expectations and apprehensions to the forefront from their schema bank. The value of ongoing reflection is apparent, but educators must consider some important issues if change is to occur. Teachers must have opportunities to learn about new ideas and practices in a supportive environment where dialogue and reflection are encouraged. They must have opportunities to implement new learnings, reflect, discuss, and adjust it to fit their needs. Providing teachers with new tools without allowing them time and support to reflect and experiment will limit their development and educational change.

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APPENDIX A

Teacher/Retelling Observation Sheet

No. 10

Philosophy

For the past year and a half, I have really wondered and worried over my reading program because reading is one of the most important things I teach. My question has been how do I help children enjoy reading and listening to stories without frustrating them and still meeting the objectives? I think that retellings might be the answer to my question.

Intro to Retellings

Have you ever wanted to dress up like someone or look like someone? Has someone ever wanted to dress or look like you? Did it bother you? How do you feel when someone wants to do everything that you do? Well, this story, Stephanie's Ponytail is about this idea of someone wanting to look like someone else. Let's read about Stephanie's ponytail.

Instructions to Collect

Now we are going to retell the story. We will work with partners. Pretend that someone has never heard this story before. You and your partner are going to create a poster that retells the story. You may use pictures and/or words. We will share these with the class.

Feelings Before

I have used some retellings before, but this was the first time I had been so open-ended. Usually, I direct, guide, and follow through with very specific questions and activities. I was nervous about what I would get. Would it be what I wanted? Would it tell me what they know.

Feelings After

I was really impressed by what my students told me about the story. They picked up on a lot about the story that I really didn't think about. They also were drawn to one particular event in the story and I've decided that I would like to do another retelling with a different format to find out more about their views

of the whole story, not just one major event. I would really like to do this more in my classroom.

Data Collection

The groups worked together on the posters. As they finished, I asked them to come over and tell me about the poster. I wrote down what they said, and only said things like "what is this?" "And then what happened?" I typed up each group's dictated retelling and scored them using Holistic 1, Holistic 2, and my own rubric.

Results

I think that the rubrics helped even out the scoring. The groups did not vary all that much in scores, however Group E did have slightly higher marks. Group C had slightly lower marks. I noticed that these results were consistent using all 3 scoring rubrics.

Conclusions

Scoring rubrics helped me look for what was there, rather than what was not there. Also, retellings that lacked details were more creative, whereas retellings that had good details were not all that creative. With scoring rubrics, though, it all balances out. Another conclusion is that the groups mostly focused on the major event of the story rather than the sequence. This did not affect the scoring because it looked at a variety of behaviors of the retellings. I think that the poster form contributed to the focus on the major event, because I did a second retelling on the same book with cartoons and they sequenced it more. The retellings showed me a lot about what and how they comprehend. The results as far as individual children were surprising. Children that aren't very strong readers did very well on the retellings. So even if they can't decode very well, they can still comprehend like the others. One final conclusion that I have about retellings is that the specifics are not as important. It's more about understanding concepts and ideas, which is definitely higher order thinking. I am now a believer when it comes to the effectiveness of retellings in assessing and teaching comprehension.

APPENDIX B

Retellings Research Chart

Sample	Textual	Affective	Cognitive	Perceptual Change	Actual Change	2 year Change
1.	X	O/NA	O/NA	Accepted	No Change	Yes
2.	O	X ---------	X	Accepted	Yes	Yes
3.	X --------	X	O	Accepted	Borderline	
Borderline: will use text based						
4.	X --------	X	X	Accepted	Yes	Yes
5.	X --------	X	disregarded	Accepted	Borderline	Yes
6.	X --------	X	disregarded	Accepted	No change	NA
7.	X			Not accepted	No change	Yes
8.	X			Not accepted	No change	
9.	X			Accepted	No change	Yes
Low expectation of students						
10.	X --------	X ---------	X	Accepted	Yes	
11.	X --------	X ---------	X	Accepted	Yes	
				Integrated		
12.	X			Not accepted	No	Yes
13.	X			Not accepted	No	Yes
14.	X			Not accepted	No	
15.	X			Not accepted	No	Yes
16.	Changed	X	X	Accepted	Yes	Yes
17.	Changed	X	X	Accepted	Yes	Yes
18.		X	X	Accepted	Yes	Yes
19.		X	X	Borderline	Yes	Yes
20.	X ---------	X ---------	X	Accepted	Yes	NA
Got what was diminished						
21.	X ---------	X ---------	X	Accepted	Yes	Yes
Direct instruction						
22.	X ---------	X ---------	X	Accepted	Yes	
More guidance needed. Did not understand the findings from the retellings. Not confidence with students. Not accepted. No change						
23.	X			more guide	No Change	Yes

APPENDIX C

Follow-up Survey

1. Are you still using retellings in your classroom? If not, why (please be explicit with your reasons)?
2. How often are you using retellings and for what purpose (instructional, assessment, extra activity, etc.)?
3. What format does your retellings take (song, poem, oral, etc.)?
4. What have you learned from using retellings?
5. What assessment instrument do you use when assessing retellings?
6. What grade and level are you using retellings?
7. What are some of the results from using retellings?
8. Have you introduced retellings to other teachers?
9. Have you tried using other alternative assessments in your classroom?
10. If so, which alternatives and how often have you used them?
11. If you would like to add anymore information regarding retellings please feel free to do so?

APPENDIX D

County Required Retelling Checklist

Retelling Checklist

General Story Information

1. Begins story with some type of introduction _____

2. Names the main character _____

3. Number of characters named _____*

4. Actual number of other characters in the story _____*

5. Score for the element of "other characters" (#3 divided by #4) _____

6. Includes a statement about time and place _____

Problem or Theme

1. Refers to the theme, goal, or problem _____

Plot Episodes or Main Events

1. Number of episodes or main events recalled _____*

2. Actual number of episodes or main events in the story _____*

3. Score for number of episodes retold (#1 divided by #2) _____

Solution and Conclusion

1. Includes the solution to the problem _____

2. Provides a conclusion or ending to the story _____

Sequence or Structure

1. Retells the story in the proper sequence illustrating an Understanding of story structure (Score 2 for completely Correct, 1 for partially correct, or 0 for no sequence. _____

**items used by not part of total score*

Student Final Score _____

Best Possible Score 10

Miller, W.H. (1995). Alternative Assessment Techniques for Reading and Writing. West Nyack, New York: Professional Publishing.

APPENDIX E
Content Analysis of Follow-up Survey

Are you still using retellings in your classroom? If not, why (please be explicit with your reasons)?

Yes - 100%

How often are you using retellings and for what purpose (instructional, assessment, extra activity, etc.)?

Usage per month: 4+ - 44%; 1-2 times - 18%; and no mention 37%

Purpose: Assessment - 69%; Instruction - 50%; Other - 31%; no mention - 12%

What format does your retellings take (song, poem, oral, etc.)?

Written - 50%; Oral - 62%; Other 62%; no mention - 6%

What have you learned from using retellings?

Textual - 100%; Cognitive - 31%; Affective - 25%

Enjoyment - 31%; Comprehension - 50%

What assessment instrument do you use when assessing retellings?

County assessment criteria - 25%; Rubric - 25%; Other - 31%; Textual - 100%

What grade and level are you using retellings?

15 Elementary schools; 1 High school; 2 Librarians

What are some of the results from using retellings?

Comprehension - 50%; Enjoyment - 31%

Textual - 100%; Cognitive - 31%; Affective - 25%

Have you introduced retellings to other teachers?

Yes - 62%; No 25%; Not sure 12%

Have you tried using other alternative assessments in your classroom?

Individual Reading Inventories; STAR, ERSI, SLOSSON, Graphic organizers

Many were unsure what alternatives were available.

If so, which alternatives and how often have you used them?

No specific numbers were given. Responses varied completely.

If you would like to add anymore information regarding retellings please feel free to do so?

N/A